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Forest Preserve District of Cook County

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Fourth Annual Message

of

PETER REINBERG

President of the Board of Forest Preserve Commissioners



January 5th, 1920

Fourth Annual Message

of

Peter Reinberg

PRESIDENT

Board of Forest Preserve Commissioners of the
Forest Preserve District of Cook County,
State of Illinois.

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To the Honorable, the Board of Forest Preserve Commissioners
of Cook County.

Gentlemen: In this survey, at the opening of the new year, of the activities of the Board of Forest Preserve Commissioners during 1919, there is one outstanding resultant on which I believe we may justly congratulate ourselves. That is the evident growing popularity with all classes of our people of the Forest Preserve District, with its now just less than 15,000 acres girdling Chicago and extending their forested length from end to end of Cook County. Only when all our people practice the seeking of healthful happiness and life-bettering relaxation in these woodland reaches will the Forest Preserve District fully attain its primal objective.

During the year just closed more than 1,500,000 persons visited and enjoyed the Forest Preserves, or almost four times as many as during the year preceding. Within the same period in excess of 1,100 camping and picnic permits were issued, or approximately three times as many as during both 1917 and 1918. These figured facts assuredly attest that this Board is approaching in Cook County the end sought by the Forest Preserve law—the preservation of the forest land for the people's playground, and the protection of those fragments of Nature's wonderful handiwork which so rapidly were being obliterated by the crushing advance of modern life and industry's grim demands.

My one heartfelt hope is that very soon we may see last year's multitude of visitors tripled and quadrupled during each twelvemonth.

INSTALL THE BUDGET SYSTEM

Along with acquirement of additional woodlands, all destined to become the great outer playground for future generations, your honorable Board will face as a foremost duty during the ensuing year the further formulation of definite methods for the protection, supervision and improvement of this magnificent heritage. You are proceeding on the commendable line of obtaining tracts not only most desirable, but which at the same time lend themselves to connecting the various original districts or larger reaches that form the foundational factors of the Preserves. Coincidentally, you must further more efficiently systematize and more closely co-ordinate the governmental organization having administrative charge of the Forest Preserve District.

In this connection, permit me to emphasize one suggestion that impresses me as of utmost import. As we were pioneers in this project of belting a great city with an extensive outer park system, so our creation of a managerial system for that project had to be evolved by actual practice and trial. As we have aimed at desirability and economy in our purchase of land, so I am sure this Board will continue to seek the development of the most economical and most efficient system in the management of this splendid public property.

As a most promising force toward this latter end, I believe that we should install a budget system. Adoption of such a method will mean increased effectiveness in intelligent planning. It will establish a uniform system of bookkeeping and permit accurate inquiry into the necessary expenses of every agency of the District. It will eliminate any possible waste, extravagance, or duplication of expense. It will centralize responsibility, and lead to the most desirable consolidation of those agencies actually required for efficient control and management.

BUDGET SYSTEM IS GOOD BUSINESS

There is no mystery about a budget system. Every business individual or corporation that seeks accommodation from banks, or purposes to raise money in any other way, prepares a statement of resources or requirements for submission to those who are to supply the funds. Installation of a budget system would conform to the best modern practice in governmental or commercial accounting, lay the basis for a thorough audit and real accounting control over all the District's expenditures, and contribute to clearer statements for the guidance of administrative officials and the information of the public.

No sufficient basis exists at present for maintaining proper auditing or accounting control over supplies, material outlays or equipment. Dollars charged against certain appropriations may be expended in the end for other purposes. It avails nothing to vote money for what the public desires if it can subsequently be used for other purposes without proper consideration. At present there is a lack of uniformity with respect to preparing estimates. There is the danger that requests are made for large sums in gross without supporting detail, and without sufficient information as to particular needs for particular purposes.

It can scarcely be denied, to use plain words, that some phases of our administrative system have been loose, accidental and disjointed. That is a natural result from the lack of centralized control over the preparation of annual estimates, and the lack of absolute responsibility on the part of any person or department for the outcome. The President is not responsible, because he lacks

the power to control; the various departments are not responsible, because committees of the Board may rewrite estimates as they see fit; the committees are not responsible, because often they have not adequate accurate information to properly criticise and pass upon departmental estimates; the Board is not responsible, because often it must accept both the work of its committees and of the departments.

BUDGET PLAN OFFERS BEST SECURITY

We thus proceed without desirable equilibrium. Department often is not balanced with department, nor expenditure with revenue. After all the appropriation estimates are in we bring in a revenue bill to cover them. There is not the machinery to follow up the executive to see if the money is spent according to law. The departmental executive practically audits his own accounts—if such procedure could be called audit. Thus, there is absent that technical knowledge and administrative experience, reduced to one effective force to always view the finances as a whole, to protect the public from extravagant demands from the government on the one hand, or, on the other, to know when the public is giving the government what it justly needs.

The Forest Preserve District, by virtue of its very objective, profoundly professes democracy. But our financial methods do not measure up to that profession. Install a budget system, and the people always will know what is going on. It will prove a safeguard against any possible obscurity, inefficiency or waste.

I would, therefore, urgently recommend to your honorable Board that we reduce our procedure to a business basis—to a method approved by private finance, corporation finance, and the most modern systems of governmental finance. Let us appropriate the District's money, raise its taxes and loans, expand its funds, and audit its accounts through the budget system. I am confident the people, who are the real owners of these spreading Forest Preserves, will unqualifiedly commend such a distinctly progressive step in safeguarding the management of their property.

ECONOMY GOVERNS LAND PURCHASES

Generally, prudent business methods have controlled land purchases during the year. With energy and industry the Board has continued to blaze its way as the original municipal body created for the sole purpose of piecing together an extensive belt of outlying playgrounds about a world metropolis and its millions of people. It has continued to deal with the acquirement of acreage in densely populated districts, as well as in sparsely settled and widely separated sections. Practice of businesslike tactics in acreage buying has dissipated the impression, prevalent in some

quarters when the District was authorized about five years ago, that forest lands would be purchased at any price fixed by owners, especially as your Board had to deal with realty long held in private ownership and with values increasing practically from month to month under stimulus of Chicago's growth.

During 1919 the Real Estate Department, through its executive head and corps of valuers, passed on 193 submissions and communications referred by the Board relative to land, in addition to numerous matters inherited from previous years. Its Board of Valuers recommended to the Board for purchase seventy-two parcels of land approximating 1,591 acres, all valued at \$603,657, of which \$59,000 represented improvements thereon. The average price per acre thus was around \$379. Further, this body now is ready, after the usual searching survey and careful consideration, to recommend for purchase six other parcels, the whole including 273½ acres, valued at \$73,875. In thirty-one cases of recommendation, price agreements not being reached with owners, condemnation was advised, about 1,120 acres being involved.

LAW DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN ACTIVE

These figures, naturally, forecast the activity of the District's Law Department. In connection with the thirty-one parcels of land ordered condemned, eighteen lawsuits were started. Thirteen of these were settled before reaching the stage of final court adjudication, two cases were tried and brought to judgment, one of which is pending in the Supreme Court on appeal, nine still are in primary litigation, and in the others condemnation petitions now are in preparation.

During the year the Law Department closed seventy-four separate purchases of real estate, involving approximately 1,772 acres at prices aggregating \$692,737. Part of this total was paid in District bonds, and \$407,500 was turned over in cash. Of these seventy-four purchases, twenty-three were closed under the Torrens system, twenty-nine sellers furnished guaranty policies, opinions of title were rendered in sixteen cases, and in six proceedings to clear titles are pending. Over 1,400 acres were bought in Elk Grove, where titles are extremely involved and will have to be cleared by proceedings under the Burnt Record Act. To meet that unusual contingency, the Law Department thus far has secured ninety-nine quit-claim deeds.

Most of these purchases were accomplished on agreed prices. Of the condemnation actions necessary, invariably instituted only where land was imperatively needed to effect contiguity of the Preserves, one covered six distinct tracts involving many minors as owners. After litigation had been set under way, one by one the owners accepted the District's proposals and trials

were dispensed with. The Department anticipates that all cases pending, as well as those in preparation, will be tried before the close of the ensuing Spring. I am pleased to speak praise of the Law Department by pointing out that in all condemnation actions carried to judgment, the verdicts of the juries almost coincided with the prices offered by the District. All such settlements were made practically on the very valuation basis fixed by our valuers.

FOREST PRESERVES COVER VAST ACREAGE

With the close of 1919 the District now actually owns 13,381.86 acres. These vast holdings have cost, including any improvements necessarily paid for, \$4,985,897.78. Adding acreage already contracted for, the total grows to 14,447 acres. Experience has shown that owners interested in forest preservation most frequently have offered their wooded tracts at fair market values, but hosts of others willingly have co-operated with the Board in determining reasonable prices for their holdings. The obstructionist has been the exception, not the usual. The above totals carry all the more interest in the light of estimates entered by experts that there are only about 30,000 acres of woodland in Cook County suitable for our conservation purposes.

As I have stated, evidence has been constant of the effectiveness of the Board's efforts to popularize the beauties, comforts and advantages of the Preserves. Each day brings demands for information, and for directions as to how to reach each wooded sector. Women's clubs and fraternal and social organizations are becoming potent publicists. Children of our schools are evincing intense interest, and Chicago's Board of Education is planning a series of stereopticon lectures to further foster youth's demands.

Fame of our forests, with their Nature-clad hills and river-ribboned valleys, is penetrating to all parts of the country. Emisaries from many counties and large cities have come to observe and inquire with the object of planning similar preserves in their home communities. Students of woodcraft, of Nature's flora and of wild animal and bird life have come from all sections to enthuse over the glories of our groves, the beauteous lengths of our streams, and the restful retreats in the hearts of our Preserves. They have praised the notable increases observable in bird and animal life under conservation encouragement.

PARADISE FOR STUDENTS OF HISTORY

Students of local and national history have found in the District's holdings a veritable adventurer's paradise. By Fortune's chance favor it invariably has been the historically famous tract in almost every locality that your Board has been enabled to

search after and acquire. These forests which you now are protecting as the recreation grounds for twentieth century citizenship were the hunting grounds and battle grounds of centuries long gone. Each sector of rugged forest, with its soil-scarring trails winding through valley and over hill, lends its specific chapter of thrilling history. These trails, easily definable today, tell the activities centuries ago of the Pottowatomies, Ottawas, Chipewas, Winnebagoes and Iroquois—Indians who roamed Chicago and Cook County before the white man stumbled through as the advance agent of modern civilization.

Ruins of French forts spell even to the casual the inspiring story of the efforts of that nation's sturdy explorers to invade the redman's favorite haunts. It is the same wooded valley we possess today along the Desplaines River that Joliet and Marquette proclaimed back in 1673 as the "realm of beautiful country." Beloved by the Indians, every turn of that stream nestled its village in those days, and every promontory had its stronghold against the invader. In the northern sections traces still afford of Cook County's first religious institution—Father Francois Pinet's Jesuit "Mission of Guardian Angel," founded in 1696 at that point where easiest portage was possible between the then headwaters of the north branch of the Chicago River and the southward flowing waters of the Desplaines.

INDIAN NAMES ARE BEING RESTORED

Three years thereafter, however, warring redmen had forced its abandonment, and driven all white pioneers from use of the "Checaugau" portages. Throughout that period and for years ensuing the Pottowatomies particularly protested white invasion by bloody wars along the shores of the Chicago, Desplaines and Calumet rivers, evidences still showing of the chains of forts and villages with which they connected their trails of convenience and strategy. Yet it was this same tribe which claimed Alexander Robinson, whose Indian name was Che-che-Pinqua, and Billy Caldwell, or Sauganash, those "good Indians" whose names are indelibly stamped in Cook County's history.

That massive rock formation in the Beverly Hills segment, standing almost 100 feet high, was the natural watch-tower from which signals issued that mobilized Indian warriors from villages extending for miles around when emergency demanded. The Salt Creek Valley, too, was another paradise of the redman. Its wooded reaches of oaks and maples and hickory and elm trees today are held by forestry experts as having no superior in our country, carpeted as they are by flora that would make any horticulturist's heart beat faster and inhabited by almost every known indigenous species of bird and animal life.

In short, both historically and geologically the Cook County Forest Preserves constitute an attraction not yet fully recognized locally. All truly hold national historic value. Volumes might be written of the history revealing itself through our acquisitions of these virgin tracts. The Board's proposal to mark these ruin sites and old-time trails with permanent tablets or monuments will be the most potent factor in perpetuating for future generations those events and traditions of other days. To that end, too, we may commend our rule of restoring the long-ago Indian names to each tract fertile with historic legend and fact. To the seeker, the Preserves form one continuous library of historical information more inviting than shelves of books alone.

PRESERVES NEVER BEFORE SO POPULAR

Figures may be dull, but they strikingly attest the increasing popularity of the Preserves. Allocation of camp sites, provision of picnic conveniences, laying out grounds for games, providing boating facilities, and the opening of additional roads and paths all have contributed to this result. These advantages we must continue to multiply. As estimated and conservatively compiled by the Foresters and Caretakers, it is figured that 1,527,640 persons visited the Preserves during the year just elapsed, as compared with 407,895 in 1918. This impressive total does not include hosts of visitors who sought the more unfrequented portions of the various districts, for it is literally true that there are acres of the wildest primeval type that probably never have been trodden by the present-day explorer.

Of this multitude of visitants, nearly all enjoyed the Preserves during the months of Summer and Autumn, 1,524,640 persons "calling" when green-garmented groves and vegetation gave their best. Thousands, however, enjoy the snow-clad landscapes of Winter. During the former period the visitors by months were as follows:

May	134,255	October	90,000
June	243,490	November	42,920
July	393,300		
August	359,150	Total.....	1,524,640
September	261,525		

Question of the relative popularity of the various districts of the Preserves is answered by the following figures, although it must be remembered that those sections claiming the heaviest visitation extend the most convenient transportation facilities as an added attraction:

District.	
No. 1. Deer Grove and Elk Grove.....	37,600
No. 2. North Branch Chicago River, and North See- tion Desplaines River Valley.....	159,850

No. 3.	South Section of North Branch Chicago River District, and North Central Section Desplaines River Valley.....	494,900
No. 4.	Central Section Desplaines River Valley.....	379,000
No. 5.	South Central portion of Desplaines River Valley, and Salt Creek District.....	241,200
No. 6.	Palos Hills and Sag Valley.....	57,300
No. 7.	Beverly Hills and South Chicago Districts....	83,275
No. 8.	Glenwood, Thornton and Chicago Heights Districts	71,515
Total.....		1,524,640

PICNICS, OUTINGS AND CAMPING PARTIES

During 1919 almost three times as many permits for picnics, outings and camping were issued as in the two years preceding. The total number was 1,101, as compared with 276 in 1918 and 103 in 1917. Following tables classify the organizations obtaining such permits and the number issued in each class:

Churches and Sunday Schools

	No. of Permits
Lutheran	63
Baptist	28
Catholic	22
Methodist Episcopal	19
Congregational	18
Presbyterian	15
Spiritualist	7
Methodist	5
Miscellaneous	104

281

Fraternal Organizations and Clubs

Camping parties	203
Boy Scouts	123
Business Men's Associations	76
Employes of business firms.....	49
Masonic	44
Athletic Clubs	34
Schools	22
Knights of Pythias.....	15
Military	10
Knights of Columbus.....	6
Royal Arcanum	3
Miscellaneous, including Neighborhood Clubs, Community Centers, Singing Societies, etc.....	235

820

Grand total 1,101

These figures do not include many small picnics or individual camps for which permits were not obtained. Popularity of the

various tracts is indicated in the following statement, showing the number of permits issued for various sectors. Proximity to Chicago and transportation accessibility were factors for districts most favored, however.

Forest Glen	152	Lyons	16
Thatcher's Woods	143	River Grove	15
Caldwell Tract	101	Riverside No. 5.....	14
Riverside No. 1.....	80	Desplaines Valley	14
Beverly Hills	67	McCormick Tract	14
Deer Grove	66	Senne Woods	11
Harms Tract	62	Riverside No. 4.....	10
Palos Park	62	Riverside No. 3.....	9
Northwestern Park	58	Elk Grove	6
Chicago Heights	40	Kolze Tract	6
LeMoyne Tract	33	Salt Creek	3
Edgebrook	30	Evanston	2
Willow Springs	26	Western Springs	2
Turnbull Tract	21		
Glenwood Tract	20		
Riverside No. 2.....	18	Total permits	1,101

BOY SCOUTS AND CAMP FIRE GIRLS

Foremost among those enthusiastically taking advantage of the Forest Preserves to enjoy the great outdoors and to study indigenous flora and fauna in their natural state have been the Boy Scouts. Aside from the 123 permits for outings and temporary camps, several permanent camps were maintained. At "Camp Roberts" and "Checaugau," in the Deer Grove section, an average of 100 boys camped throughout the Summer months, studying woodcraft and indulging in trail-making, athletic exercises, signalling and the general routine of that splendid organization. At four permanent camps, two in Glen View, one out LaGrange way, and one in Northfield, detachments may be found at all times. These youthful American patriots merit our heartfelt thanks for the assistance they have given in protecting birds and animals and the Preserves generally. The Camp Fire Girls, an analogous organization of American girlhood, take their outings in the Preserves and have rendered like service.

Another force, which doubtless will attract older boys who have passed the usual Boy Scout age, is presented in the recent organization of the Boy Scout Forest Rangers, with permanent headquarters on the Desplaines River in the Township of Leyden. These Rangers will be afforded opportunity to study forestry in all its phases by practical co-operation with the Foresters, Wardens and Caretakers of the Forest Preserve District.

Turning to the other end of the social scale, 1,038 children and mothers from Chicago's congested districts enjoyed outings during the Summer at Camp Reinberg, located in Deer Grove.

There, for ten-day periods, successive groups of wearied and poverty-beset unfortunates enjoyed the pure air and sunshine, gaining health and strength by out-of-doors living and playing among the trees. Many of these never before had known the joys of rural life. The outings were supervised by the County Agent, various charity organizations and the Bureau of Social Service. I trust that the Board may increase the number of these particular camps, so that many more thousands of poor children may benefit each year. Philanthropic organizations might fittingly take up this benevolent work.

ENGINEERING AND FORESTRY DEPARTMENTS

Throughout the year the Engineering and Forestry Departments have labored to provide improvements that must make the Preserves increasingly attractive to the people. Roads and bridges have been constructed, picnic conveniences increased, boating facilities assured, golf courses and baseball diamonds laid out, wells driven to provide accessible water supplies, comfort stations built, reforestation carried on, and this vast natural park belt generally equipped with every factor that will contribute to the recreation and enjoyment of all. This is as it should be. As additional hundreds of thousands are attracted each year to this magnificent outer park system, the more quickly will private enterprise be spurred to providing additional ways of reaching the Preserves, so that soon all sectors may be available to every citizen.

In its specific field, the Engineering Department made 174 surveys of area acquired by the District. All these were platted, the acreage certified to, and the legal descriptions checked before the completion of any involved purchase transaction. Considerable money saving thus resulted, for in some cases more acreage was submitted for purchase than was actually owned. Surveying was carried on, too, for the accumulation of official record data and the preparation of maps for the guidance of visitors, as well as preparatory to all projected road improvements.

Five major construction projects were carried on under contracts during the year. The new Washington Boulevard bridge, a three-span reinforced concrete structure over the Desplaines River, will be of great public benefit when completed next Spring. In that connection, the extension of Washington Boulevard at this point is over half completed. The desirable Carpenter Road improvement has been finished, providing an 18-foot highway extending for a mile north from Elston Avenue to the city limits, the municipality paying part of the cost. Reparation of the bridge north of Irving Park Boulevard is an advantage, and adequate comfort stations have been constructed at Edgebrook.

ROAD AND RIVER IMPROVEMENTS

The Chief Forester notes various important road and river improvements completed during the year, which it may be of interest to specify in part. In Deer Grove a road has been graded from the Dundee Road through the woods, past the artificial "wonder lake," emerging on the Lake Zurich Road. The latter has been widened and filled, forming a dam that has created another beautiful lake. Highways have been opened in the Turnbull Tract and in Elk Grove. At Glenview a roadway, partly gravel and with a concrete ford across the Chicago River's branch, connects the Harms Timber Road with Church Street.

Forest Glen has a new highway and parking space at the picnic grove. In Northfield a way has been opened from the West River Road to Milwaukee Avenue through the forests, crossing the river by a combination dam and ford. A new ribbon of macadam now cuts through Thatcher's Woods; at the Sag a driveway has been graded from Archer Avenue over the hills and through the woods to the Bluff Road; in South Chicago a cinder drive has been laid; and in Chicago Heights the Schubert Tract has a new traffic artery and parking area, while the filling in of 700 feet of stone road connects Cottage Grove Avenue with the Preserves.

The second of the projected series of combined dams and fords in the Desplaines River was completed, backing the water up to the first of these barriers constructed just south of Wheeling. These dams, by raising the water levels, promise to make this stream available for boating, fishing and swimming. Above the new dam is a swimming-hole with a sloping sandy shore equal to any bathing beach. These improvements promise to eliminate stagnant pools due to low water in Summer, to abate any dangers due to inadequate sewage dilution at the same period, and at the same time to make the river available for boating at all times. The increased volume of water should also benefit adjacent forests.

Comprehensive plans for suggested road, bridge and similar improvements to be carried out during the ensuing year already have been outlined by the Engineering Department.

REFORESTING MAY AID WHOLE STATE

We are persevering in our task of reforestation. Around 25,400 purchased trees have been planted, while 5,466 others have been transferred to needy tracts. The nursery, established with the object of providing for this problem in the future, now is growing 250,000 seedling trees of various varieties. This establishment is equipped with seed bed frames and a pumping system to supply water, but its full merits remain to be demonstrated.

It is my hope that reforesting of our Preserves may extend a beneficial influence throughout the State. Governor Lowden already has pointed out that many hundreds of thousands of acres of land in Illinois are better suited to forestry than to anything else, and has urged the State Legislature to practically encourage their reforestation. As he has asserted, private owners of land will not content themselves with a crop that does not mature for half a century, and, therefore, will not plant these acres to trees without that encouragement. Yet if all these waste acres were so planted with trees, in a half-century Illinois probably would produce timber enough for our own needs.

Further, with this reclamation of waste area, such forests would aid in conserving moisture, would diminish damage from overflows, and would tend to prevent the washing and gulying of our rolling lands. In these circumstances, may we not trust that our reforesting achievements possibly may influence a spirit of emulation, both private and public, in other sections of the State.

GOLF LINKS AND BASEBALL DIAMONDS

Providing of golf links for the free use of the people, as urged by devotees of the game, now is a reality. The 18-hole course at Palos will be ready when the playing season opens. Golf experts assert that it easily surpasses any of the public courses now in use in Cook County, because of its natural beauty and the character of the ground upon which it has been laid out. By purchase, too, we have acquired the nine-hole links at Edgebrook formerly owned by the club bearing that name. This will be open to the public this Spring. Owing to the game's popularity and the congestion of the public courses in the City's parks, these are expected to attract hosts of players. Your Board still has under consideration the plea for establishment of another links near the Portage Tract, in the vicinity of West Thirty-ninth Street. If the demand is granted, it probably would be best to purchase necessary land in order that the natural beauties and flora of the tract mentioned be not destroyed for such purpose.

Baseball fans are to have their inning, also, for two diamonds have been constructed in the District, and a third is under way. In considering such propositions that require considerable area, I would respectfully advise that the wishes of the people should be carefully sounded. The law demands, primarily, that the forests be preserved for the free and unobstructed use of the people. With Cook County's millions and diversified opinions, however, many regard the Preserves as asylums for birds and flowers; others as reaches for rest and recreation in the spreading woodland shades. Hosts prefer golf, and other hosts prefer tennis or baseball or athletic fields. I believe, if wisely managed, this great natural park can satisfactorily provide for all. But such privileges should

be proportionately distributed, no group sharing to the detriment of the others, and in all cases the natural beauties and advantages of the Preserves, which we are specifically charged with conserving, must be protected to the maximum.

SHEEP AND GOATS

At present 370 sheep are sheltered in the Preserves. During the year 291 sheep and lambs were shipped to the Oak Forest Institutions, where other flocks are kept and contribute to the provisioning of Cook County's Infirmary and Tuberculosis Hospital with their 3,400 patients. Almost the entire Forest Preserve District now is withheld from grazing. Its sheep originally were procured chiefly for utilitarian and conservation purposes. There are tracts where growths of briars, burrs and weeds make portions inaccessible, choke desirable vegetation, and provide material for dangerous forest fires. In such spots moderate grazing is a factor for good. I may add that the wool clip yielded by our flock for the year brought in \$1,591.74.

Your Board has under consideration the question of also introducing goats in the Preserves. Proponents of the plan contend that, aside from grazing benefits already noted, the milk of these animals would curatively aid the County's charges who are suffering from tuberculosis. Opponents insist that these ruminating quadrupeds will destroy flowers and vegetation. Should you decide to admit goats in small numbers, I believe you will assure the public that they will be herded in a limited area, and prevented from destroying flora or "butting in" where visitors stroll or gather.

We are rapidly transforming our acquired farm land into hay and grass territory. Cash receipts from rentals and sales for the fiscal year just closed, as far as now checked up, show the following:

Rentals	\$ 7,642.30
Wood	1,309.50
Pasturage	2,621.00
Hay	615.50
Wool	1,591.74
Hides	4.91
Old barbed wire	30.00
	<hr/>
	\$13,814.95

ARBORETUM AND ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

Proposed establishment of a great arboretum, possibly supplemented by a forest museum and library, has been discussed in a preliminary way during the year. A special committee has tentatively considered the scope and site for such an admirable

project. Among the citizen members of that body, whom I particularly wish to thank for providing important information and wise counsel, are Mr. Charles L. Hutchinson and Prof. Charles F. Millspaugh. It is pertinent, also, in this connection, that I express our extreme appreciation of the valuable services rendered by the citizen members of the Board's Plan Committee—Mr. Victor F. Lawson, Col. R. R. McCormick, Mr. Dwight H. Perkins and Mr. Charles H. Wacker. Aside from advising as to the arboretum plan, they gave freely of their valuable time, especially did Mr. Perkins, in visiting and inspecting tracts and recommending purchases. We anticipate progress in arboretum planning within the ensuing months, but it may be best to "make haste slowly" and wisely in this matter, laying foundations securely and deep, for we hope that when consummated Cook County may claim the world's most wonderful establishment of that kind.

Very soon, too, your honorable Board will be called upon to consider the gift to the District of a tract of about 150 acres, valued at approximately \$290,000, contingent on the creation thereon of a great zoölogical garden. This generous proposal, tendered in such praiseworthy public spirit by Mrs. Edith Rockefeller McCormick, should receive your most earnest attention. If accepted, we should see to it that our Forest Preserves also may boast a zoölogical garden unsurpassed the world over. Our heartfelt thanks are expressed for this munificent offer, and I feel that such a project, carried out on a large scale both educational and conservational, would tremendously increase the attraction of the County's vast outlying park belt.

COMPTROLLER ASKS BUSINESS METHODS

In closing, I would report that the Forest Preserve District now has in its service 107 regular employes, with a monthly payroll totaling \$17,488.32. These do not include laborers, of whom a force was utilized during the year ranging from sixteen in February to 114 in September.

On December 1, last, the outstanding bonds of the District aggregated \$6,414,000.

In connection with the District's finances, permit me to point out that the Comptroller, in his latest report, advances certain suggestions which support my recommendation that a real business system—a comprehensive and efficient budget system—be installed. After urging changes in the existing method of collecting and accounting rentals from tenants still in the Preserves, this official adds:

"A new system should be instituted covering the purchase of all material; in fact, for all purchases by the District except real

estate. Under the present system each department is allowed a certain amount to care for its needs for the year. But during the last year several funds were overdrawn, due to many employes purchasing material without making any attempt to consult the Purchasing Department as to the condition of funds, and without receiving a proper requisition and order number. Requisition and order number should be rigidly required before actual purchase of material of any kind, otherwise it is absolutely impossible for the Comptroller's Department to keep an accurate record of the various funds.

"The Comptroller is called upon from time to time to furnish report of the moneys expended in certain districts or for certain projects. This has been impossible during the last year, so far as penny accuracy is concerned, because of lack of information carried on invoices and requisitions. I would suggest that all invoices received be marked as to destination of materials, and that employes receiving such goods furnish the Purchasing Department with delivery receipts bearing their signatures."

I would earnestly repeat the imperative need of the inauguration of the budget plan, with such attendant betterments in methods of departmental transactions as may be approved from the standpoint of business economy and accuracy.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

I have not referred in this message to the importance of the Constitutional Convention, which will be convened in Springfield tomorrow. Fortunately, the members of this Board also form the Board of Commissioners of Cook County. Hence, the latter body's standing committee having to do with the County's proposals to be presented to the convention which is to draft a new State constitution readily can care also for the interests of the Forest Preserve District. The rights and needs of the District, however, should be watchfully guarded and advanced.

Permit me to heartily thank the members of your honorable Board for the co-operation and counsel given during the year now ended, and to commend the conservative and wise lines of policy uniformly pursued. I believe you have been guided by appreciation of the fact that each and every citizen of Cook County is a partner in this splendid project—the greatest of its particular kind—and have sought to solve the complex and multiplicity of problems presented for your action from the viewpoint of the interests of these stockholders.

Respectfully submitted,

PETER REINBERG,

President.

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